

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A system for charging a fee for a video information, comprising:

recording and reproducing means for recording scrambled signals including video information and charging information on a recording media and reading the scrambled signals therefrom;

means for reproducing original video signals from the signals read from the recording media by the recording and reproducing means; and

detecting means for detecting the charging information in the signals read from the recording media.

2. A system according to Claim 1, wherein the charging information includes first charging information and second charging information other than the first charging information.

3. A system according to Claim 2, further including charge processing means for conducting a charging process according to the first or second charging information, the charge processing means conducting the charging process according to the second charging information when the second charging information is detected.

4. A system according to Claim 3, wherein:

the video information includes first video information and second video information,

the first charging information being added to the first video information and the second charging information is added to the second video information; and

the charge processing means includes means for deciding a charging condition of the first video information according to the charging information, thereby calculating an amount of charge associated with a reproduction period of time of the first video information according to the decided charging condition.

5. A system according to Claim 4, wherein:

the second charging information is represented with signals in a plurality of charging signal areas arranged in the second video information at a predetermined interval; and

a charging condition is determined for the second charging information when a predetermined number of signals in the plural charging signal areas are detected by the detecting means.

6. A system according to Claim 5, wherein said charge processing means includes:

means for calculating an amount of charge for a predetermined period of time according to the first or second charging information;

means for measuring a period of time in which the scrambled signals are reproduced, and

means for settling payment of an amount of charge each time the predetermined period of time is measured by the measuring means.

7. A system according to Claim 4, wherein:

said second charging information is represented with signals in a plurality of charging signal areas distributively arranged in the second video information; and a charging condition is determined for the second charging information when a predetermined combination of charging signals in the plural charging signal areas is detected by the detecting means.

8. A system according to Claim 4, further including:

means for detecting errors in the reproduced signals and generating an error signal when the quantity of the detected errors exceeds a predetermined value; and

means for changing the charging condition in response to the error signal.

9. A system according to Claim 4, further including:

means for detecting errors in the reproduced signals and generating an error signal when the quantity of the detected errors exceeds a predetermined value; and

means for invalidating the charging process in response to the error signal.

10. A system according to Claim 4, wherein the charging condition corresponding to the second charging information specifies that a predetermined amount of charge is subtracted from the amount of charge, a predetermined discount rate is applied to the amount of charge, or the charging process is invalidated.

11. A system for charging a fee for a video information, comprising:

video information output means for selectively outputting therefrom a signal including first video information or a signal including second video information;

means for adding first charging information to the signal including the first video information from the video information output means and adding second charging information other than the first charging information to the signal including the second video information;

means for transmitting therefrom the signal to which the first or second charging information is added; and

reproducing means for receiving the signal transmitted from the transmitting means and obtaining from the received signal the first or second video information and the first or second charging information.

12. A system according to Claim 11, wherein the reproducing means includes:

a recording and reproducing apparatus for recording on a recording media the signal transmitted from the transmitting means and reproducing the signal on the recording media; and

means for detecting the charging information in the signal on the recording media reproduced by the recording and reproducing apparatus.

13. A system according to Claim 11, wherein the charging information adding means distributively adds the first charging information and the second charging information respectively to the first video information and the second video information.

14. A system according to Claim 13, wherein the Charging information adding means adds the first charging information and the second charging information at a fixed interval respectively to the first video information and the second video information.

15. A system for charging a fee for a video information, comprising:

means for receiving a signal including first charging signal transmitted from an information source, second charging information other than the first charging information, and video information;

means for reading the first or second charging information from the received signal;

means for detecting an event that the second charging information is read from the signal; and

means for conducting, when the reading of the second charging information is detected, a charging process according to the second charging information.

16. A system for charging a fee for a video information, comprising:

means for reproducing a signal recorded on a recording media, the signal including first video information to which first charging information is added and second video information to which second charging information other than the first charging information is added;

means for detecting the first or second charging information in the reproduced signal;

means for deciding whether or not the second charging information is detected at least a predetermined number of times; and

means for conducting, when the first charging information is detected and the second charging information is detected less than the predetermined number of times, a charging process according to the first charging information and conducting, when the first charging information is detected and the second

charging information is detected at least the predetermined number of times, a charging process according to the second charging information.

17. A system according to Claim 16, wherein the means for conducting the charging process includes:

means for calculating an amount of charge for a predetermined period of time according to the first or second charging information;

means for measuring a period of time in which the signals are reproduced, and

means for settling payment of an amount of charge each time the predetermined period of time is measured by the measuring means.

18. A system according to Claim 17, wherein the settling means includes:

interface means to which an IC card as a storage of electronic money is connected; and

means for withdrawing the amount of charge from the IC card keeping therein the electronic money each time the predetermined period of time is measured.

19. A system according to Claim 17, further including:

means for detecting errors in the reproduced signal and creating an error signal when the quantity of the detected error exceeds a predetermined value; and

means for changing the amount of charge in response to the error signal.

20. A system for charging a fee for a video information, comprising:

means for reproducing a signal recorded on a recording media, the signal including first video information to which first charging information is added and second video information to which second charging information other than the first charging information is added, the second charging information being represented with charging signals in a plurality of areas distributively arranged in the second video information;

means for detecting the first charging information in the reproduced signal;

means for deciding a first charging condition according to the first charging information;

means for detecting the second charging information according to the charging signals in the charging signal areas detected by the detecting means;

means for deciding a second charging condition according to the second charging information;  
and

means for conducting, when the first charging information is detected and the second charging information is



not detected, a charging process according to the first charging information and conducting, when the second charging information is detected, a charging process according to the second charging information.

21. A system according to Claim 20, wherein said means for conducting the charge process includes:

means for calculating an amount of charge for predetermined period of time according to the first or second charging information;

means for measuring a period of time in which the signals are reproduced, and

means for settling payment of an amount of charge each time the predetermined period of time is measured by the measuring means.

22. A system according to Claim 20, wherein the second charging condition is decided according to a combination of the charging signals in a predetermined number of areas of the plural charging signal areas.

23. A system according to Claim 21, wherein the settling means includes:

interface means to which an IC card as a storage of electronic money is connected; and

means for withdrawing the amount of charge from the IC card keeping therein the electronic money each time the predetermined period of time is measured.

24. A system according to Claim 21, further including:

means for detecting errors in the reproduced signal and creating an error signal when the quantity of the detected errors exceeds a predetermined value; and

means for changing the first or second charging condition in response to the error signal.

25. A system according to Claim 21, further including:

means for detecting errors in the reproduced signal and creating an error signal when the quantity of the detected errors exceeds a predetermined value; and

means for invalidating the charging process in response to the error signal.

26. A method for charging a fee for a video information, comprising the steps of:

recording scrambled signals including video information and charging information on a recording media;

reading the scrambled signals from the recording media;

reproducing original video signals from the signals read from the recording media by a recording and reproducing means; and

detecting the charging information in the signals read from the recording media.

27. A method for charging a fee for a video information, comprising the steps of:

selectively outputting therefrom a signal including first video information or a signal including second video information;

adding first charging information to a signal including the first video information and adding second charging information other than the first charging information to the signal including the second video information;

transmitting the signal to which the first or second charging information is added; and

receiving the transmitted signal and reproducing from the received signal the first or second video information and the first or second charging information.

28. A method for charging a fee for a video information, comprising the steps of:

receiving a signal including first charging signal transmitted from an information source, second charging information other than the first charging information, and video information;

reading the first or second charging information from the received signal;

detecting an event that the second charging information is read from the signal; and

conducting, when the reading of the second charging information is detected, a charging process according to the second charging information.

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a charging system according to the present invention. The system includes a charging controller 10, a charging source 20, and a charging device 30. The charging controller 10 is connected to the charging source 20 and the charging device 30. The charging controller 10 is configured to receive charging information from the charging device 30 and to control the charging source 20 based on the received information. The charging source 20 is configured to provide a charging current to the charging device 30. The charging device 30 is configured to receive the charging current and to provide a charging status to the charging controller 10.